



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



JOE FOSS FIELD RECEIVES STORMREADY CERTIFICATION

The South Dakota Air National Guard's operations at Joe Foss Field have joined the City of Sioux Falls and Minnehaha County as recipients of the National Weather Service's StormReady certification. The Base is one of less than 30 Department of Defense installations and only the second National Guard installation in the United States to achieve this certification.

Todd Heitkamp, county warning meteorologist with the National Weather Service office in Sioux Falls, presented the recognition signage to Col. Russ Walz, commander of the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing on Thursday, Jan. 19. The signs will be placed throughout the installation to let airmen and visitors know that the 114th Fighter Wing is StormReady.

Senior Master Sgt. Rick Larson, installation emergency manager, credits the entire base for the honor. "We have critical areas that have stepped up to meet the guidance, including base communications, command post, civil engineering, operations, security and fire. Without their shared vision and contributions this certification would not be possible. Command support has been tremendous!" said Senior Master Sgt. Larson.

StormReady is a nationwide program that helps communities better protect their citizens during severe weather. The program encourages a proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations. For more information on StormReady go to <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov/>.



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VABHHCS TO HOST WOMEN'S RETREAT

The specialized Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Outpatient Treatment Program (PCT) of the VA Black Hills Health Care System is hosting its semi-annual women's retreat April 27-29, 2012. The retreat will be held at the Fort Meade Campus, two miles east of Sturgis.

The PCT staff takes a holistic approach to veteran's treatment and addresses psychological, physical, social and spiritual issues related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The semi-annual women's retreats were developed as part of the VA's rural health care initiative, "serving the underserved".

The semi-annual weekend retreat, beginning at 12:00 pm on April 27th, is for women veterans of all eras diagnosed with PTSD and family members (wives, significant others, mothers, adult daughters, etc.) of male veterans diagnosed with PTSD. The weekend retreats offer a condensed psycho educational, experiential format that educates participants of the debilitating symptoms of PTSD, effects on the family, with a particular emphasis on developing healthier coping strategies and increasing one's social support network.

"The PCT Women's Retreat in its 18th year, seeks to help participants examine some of the basic questions in their lives," said Cathy Edler, Addiction Therapist for the PCT Program and Retreat Coordinator. "The volunteer facilitators and participants build a community of people who are willing to take time to support each other. The retreat does not have your answers, but will provide the time, place and personal support for you to search within yourself."

The Disabled American Veterans Charitable Trust (DAV) has graciously bestowed a yearly grant for the retreat program. This funding helps to cover meals and lodging expenses for all eligible participants.

Participants are responsible for all transportation costs. Should you not be able to afford transportation costs, "Air compassion for Veteran's" program may be able to assist. To apply for assistance Call their Operations Team: 888-662-6794 or Email the Operations Team at :

ops@aircompassionforveterans.org

Seating is limited to 35 participants and is on a first come, first served basis. Participants must be screened and pre-register by phoning the PCT Program at 720-7449 or 1-800-743-1070, extension 7449.

BLACK HILLS STOCK SHOW THANKS SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN

The Black Hills Stock Show Foundation recognized Soldiers from the South Dakota Army National Guard and Airmen from Ellsworth Air Force Base Tuesday, Jan. 31, for the ninth consecutive year during their Military Appreciation Day at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center in Rapid City.

The Stock Show Foundation is a non-profit organization established to manage scholarship and grant programs benefiting the communities, the region and the people who support Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo and the livestock industry.



VA LAUNCHES ACQUISITION INTERNSHIP

A special internship to prepare newly-returned veterans to become federal contracting specialists was launched recently at the Acquisitions Academy of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in Frederick, Md.

Called "Warriors to Workforce," the internship is a three-year program. Participants will earn the 24 educational credits in business required to become contracting professionals. The program includes courses in leadership, technical acquisition training and on-the-job experience.

At graduation, participants will have taken the required coursework to achieve a Federal Acquisitions Certification in Contracting, which is recognized throughout the federal sector as evidence of solid education in the career field. Successful graduates will be eligible for contract specialist positions at the GS-11 level.

In the past two years, the government's contracting force has shrunk, although the volume and complexity of contracts has increased. The VA opened its Acquisitions Academy in September 2008 in response to the growing shortage of contracting professionals, both for the VA and other federal agencies.

Twenty-three Veterans are enrolled in the inaugural class of the "Warriors to Workforce" internship. Between them, they have seven Purple Hearts, two Bronze Stars and over 170 years of military experience.

More information about the VA's Acquisitions Academy is available on the Internet at www.acquisitionacademy.va.gov.



Making a Difference

In the two years since the Academy has been opened Chancellor Lisa Doyle has created an unparalleled, enriching learning environment.

On the Horizon

Building on its success, the VA Acquisition Academy is poised to open two new schools.

AcademySchools

WHAT Our Students Have to Say

Contracting Professional School
Con215 — "I enjoyed the course and was impressed with your Acquisition Academy instructor. VAAA staff were outstanding!" ~Purchasing Agent, Togus VAMC

Program Management School
"I plan to apply the project management best practices (stakeholder involvement, team development, work breakdown structure, earned value management, Cost-Benefit Analysis, etc.) used to improve my existing project on all future projects. These techniques/tools have proven to be very valuable." ~Project Engineer, VISN 4



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SDNG TO CELEBRATE 150 YEARS OF SERVICE

The South Dakota National Guard will mark 150 years of service to the state and nation on Friday, as they celebrate the Jan. 27, 1862 birth date of the organization's formation.

With a proud 150-year heritage of serving as the state's militia, the SDNG finds its origins dating back to 1862 as part of the Dakota Territory.

Since that time, SDNG units have served in nearly every major war or conflict since the Civil War, as well as provided assistance to the state in times of domestic emergencies such as floods, fires, tornadoes and winter storms.

"We are very proud to be celebrating this historic milestone in our organization's history, and we look forward to continuing that lineage of service to our state and nation," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "Other than during World War II when there was a total mobilization of the South Dakota National Guard, these past 10 years clearly ranks among the most significant periods of our history."

To commemorate this lineage of service, the SDNG is planning several celebrations to be conducted later this year.

The flagship dates for this celebration will be held on June 8 at Camp Rapid, Rapid City, as part of their Joint Force Headquarters Readiness Center open house and July 21 at Joe Foss Field as part of the Sioux Falls Air Show. Both events will be open to the public.

Other recognition events are being planned throughout the state to coincide with local community events in which SDNG units are stationed. Dates and location for those events are to be determined and will be released upon confirmation.



The Beginning of the South Dakota National Guard

The journey of the Dakota militiaman begins during the Civil War with Companies A and B of the Dakota Cavalry.

On March 2, 1861, President James Buchanan signed the act establishing the Dakota Territory. By that time, Vermillion, Bon Homme and Elk Point were growing communities. The territory tended to be people who were genuine settlers, mostly immigrants from Germany, Norway and Sweden.

Earlier in the 1850s, the U.S. Army had established garrisons at Fort Pierre and Fort Randall on the Missouri River. Their mission was to protect the 5,000 settlers from the threat of Native American attacks.

However, when the Civil War started, the Army withdrew three companies from Fort Randall leaving it in an exposed position. This led to the Dec. 7, 1861 proclamation, by the Territorial Governor William Jayne, to raise two companies of volunteer militia.

Recruiting centers were then established in Yankton, Vermillion, and Bon Homme. The citizens were very patriotic with a lot of local pride, and in just over one month enough men had enlisted to assemble the first company of citizen-soldiers. On Jan. 27, 1862, Capt. Nelson Miner, company commander, formed the unit in Yankton, Company A, Dakota Cavalry.

This was the first unit of the Dakota Territory Militia. This was the birth of the South Dakota National Guard.

Celebrating 150 Years

SDNG TO CELEBRATE 150 YEARS OF SERVICE (CONTINUED)

History of the South Dakota National Guard

Since that fateful date in 1862, the SDNG has since seen combat during the Spanish-American War, World War I and II, Operation Just Cause and Operation Desert Storm. The National Guard was also called up during the Mexican Border Conflict, Korean War, Berlin Crisis and peace-keeping missions in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, each of South Dakota's 28 National Guard communities has experienced a unit mobilization in support of Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn. More than 4,600 Soldiers and 1,500 Airmen have deployed in support of these operations and continue to deploy today.

The National Guard is the only military component that holds a dual-mission consisting of both federal and state roles. The federal mission is to maintain trained and equipped units available for prompt mobilization for war or a national emergency. At the state level, the governor reserves the ability, under the Constitution, to call up members of the National Guard in times of domestic emergencies.

Throughout the years, natural disasters have called forth the Guard's spirit of teamwork and sacrifice to battle floods, fires, blizzards and tornado destruction. From the Rapid City Flood of 1972 to the 1997 Spencer Tornado to Hurricane Katrina and Rita in 2005, and most recently the 2011 Missouri River Flood, the SDNG has helped its fellow South Dakotans and Americans in times of need.



The South Dakota National Guard Today

Today's SDNG remains strong with nearly 4,400 Soldiers and Airmen available to execute its dual-mission on the state and federal level. The Guard is now in 28 communities throughout South Dakota and is comprised of 64 separate Army Guard units and detachments, and 16 Air Guard units. These units perform a variety of missions; everything from command and control, administration, engineering, field artillery, transportation, logistics, communications, maintenance, aviation, public affairs, military police, firefighting and medical.

The Guard is no longer a strategic reserve to the active component, but an operational force directly integrated into active-duty deployments and missions. The force structure of the SDNG is designed to meet the needs of the future force; giving the Guard an enhanced capability to respond in times of emergencies and natural disasters and to support Overseas Contingency Operations.

The SDNG had a significant impact on the state's economy with more than \$181 million dollars in expenditures and wages in 2011. The SDNG is also one of the largest employers in the state with more than 960 full-time employees, along with nearly 3,400 traditional Guard members who train on a part-time basis while pursuing a career or civilian education.

These full-time employees, along with state employees and civilian contractors, work to assist the traditional Guardsman by providing administrative, training and logistical support. This support collectively goes into helping units meet mobilization and readiness requirements.

The South Dakota Army National Guard remains strong with nearly 3,400 Soldiers available for state and federal missions. The nerve center for the SDARNG resides at the state headquarters at Camp Rapid in Rapid City; an 84-acre training site first developed in 1924.

The South Dakota Air National Guard is located on the southeast corner of Joe Foss Field in Sioux Falls and was federally recognized in 1946. It has nearly 1,100 Airmen assigned to its headquarters and the 114th Fighter Wing. The mission of the SDANG is to provide combat capability to the war fight, security for the homeland and to provide combat-ready units in three roles: federal, state and community.

The proud heirs of the militia tradition can be found in the men and women of today's SDNG. They stand ready to leave the comforts of home and family to help their friends and neighbors, defend the nation's interests and bring peace and hope to people throughout the world.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF KOREAN WAR

The Department of Defense 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee, authorized in the 2011 Defense Authorization Bill, is dedicated to thanking and honoring all the veterans of the Korean war, their families and especially those who lost loved ones in that war.

During the next three years, the Committee will honor the service and sacrifice of Korean War Veterans, commemorate the key events of the war, and educate Americans of all ages about the historical significance of the Korean War.

The commemoration period began in 2010 and will continue until 2013 to coincide with the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War, which was from 1950-1953.

The DoD 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee is committed to locating and recognizing Korean War Veterans. The Committee is partnering with various government departments and agencies and working with all of the Military Service components.

Bob Hill, past State Commander of the South Dakota Disabled American Veterans, is South Dakota's Ambassador to the DoD's 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee.

In 2011, he coordinated events in Brookings, Sioux

Falls, Rapid City, Watertown, Mitchell and Sisseton, honoring Korean War era veterans. The first large exhibit for 2012 will be May 12 in Brookings (see attached poster).

The Secretary of Defense has certificates of appreciation that he would like to give to all Korean War Veterans. If you know of any veterans that should be recognized, please contact:

KW60
c/o Robert W. Hill
PO Box 722
Brookings, SD
57066

Also, if you are interested in assisting Bob with his activities throughout the state, please call him at 605-690-5041.



MISSION

Honor the service and sacrifice of Korean War Veterans, American service members and their allies who fought heroically to preserve freedom.

Commemorate the key events of the war.

Educate the American people about the significance of the Korean War.

ONCE A BELIEVER, ALWAYS A BELIEVER IN SANTA AND HIS COUNTRY



There are three stage's of a man's life: he believes in Santa Claus, he doesn't believe in Santa Claus, he is Santa Claus.

Those of us that have been fortunate to know Bruce Howell, Marshall County Veterans Service Officer, we know that he has only had two stages in his life—"Believe In" and "Be Santa Claus!"

Bruce began his Santa Claus career in 1968 when he was in the 199th Army Infantry Brigade stationed in Vietnam at a base camp three miles from a Catholic orphanage. The soldiers took two five-ton trucks and transported the children and the nuns from their school to the base for a party with Santa. Most of these children had not even heard of Santa, let alone seen one.

Howell's coat and pants were sewn out of red satin by a local housemother. His beard was made out of a coat hanger and cotton balls. To make himself look more realis-

tic, he glued cotton balls to his face and eyebrows.

To this date, Howell assists Santa Claus at the annual VFW membership Christmas party.

Howell entered the U.S. Army after graduating from high school in Columbus, OH, and joined the military police. He became a special agent with the Criminal Investigation Division. While stationed in Hawaii, Howell got a college degree at the University of Hawaii in criminal justice. Howell dedicated 22 years of his life to the U.S. Army, living in Alaska, Vietnam, Germany, Panama Canal, Korea, Hawaii, and Italy.

After his retirement in 1980, Howell opened a private investigative security company and later went on to serve as the North Region Security Director for ALCO.

For the past three years, Howell has served as the Marshall County Veterans Service Officer. Just like Santa Claus, Howell devotes his time to improving the lives of others. He works with veterans and their families to secure the benefits they have earned.

Photos courtesy of Britton Journal.



Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus."

- Francis Pharcellus Church



ARENDS JOINS SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Command Sergeant Major George Arends joins the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs team. Arends, a graduate from Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, will serve as a Field Officer in the Sioux Falls Claims Office.

Arends joined the South Dakota Army National Guard on March 18, 1982. He has deployed twice in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. During the first campaign, CSM Arends served as First Sergeant for Charlie Battery, 1/147th Field Artillery, which was stationed in Southeast Baghdad at Forward Operating Base Rustahmiah from 2005-2006. Charlie Battery's mission included training Iraqi police; providing site security during elections; overseeing construction of new police stations; and conducting area presence patrols.

CSM Arends was appointed as the Battalion Command Sergeant Major for 1/147th Field Artillery on September 3, 2007. In this position, he deployed for the second time to the U.S. Central Command's area of operation where the battalion was stationed with its 365 Soldiers in Kuwait at Camps Patriot and Arifjan from 2009-2010. During this time, the unit conducted various security missions in support of overall stability and support operations.

CSM Arends is a traditional M-day Soldier currently assigned to Headquarters 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

In his civilian career for the past 32 years, he has owned and operated a small construction company in Sioux Falls. George and his wife

Mary Ann have two children—John and Jessica.

Deputy Secretary Steve Harding said, "We want to formally welcome George to the Department. His outstanding credentials and expertise will be of great value to the Department, our veterans and their families."



Take A Moment To Thank A Veteran

When you see someone in a uniform
Someone who serves us all,
Doing military duty,
Answering their country's call,
Take a moment to thank them
For protecting what you hold dear;
Tell them you are proud of them;
Make it very clear.

Just tap them on the shoulder,
Give a smile, and say,
"Thanks for what you're doing;
To keep us safe in the USA!"

By Joanna Fuchs

WEISS APPOINTED TO BOMA

Gov. Dennis Daugaard has appointed Pierre resident Col. Larry Weiss (Ret.) to the Department of the Military's Board of Military Affairs.

Weiss currently works part-time for South Dakota State University in the civil engineering department's local transportation assistance program; providing assistance to local governments in transportation problem solving and training. Weiss also spent 37 years working for the S.D. Department of Transportation and retired as the chief engineer in 2002; he also served 37 years in the S.D. Army National Guard as an engineer

officer retiring at the rank of colonel in 1994.

"I feel honored for having been appointed to this board," said Weiss. "I plan to use my background in the National Guard as an engineer and in leadership positions in serving on this board."

Weiss succeeds Don Rounds of Pierre, who has been on the board since 2003.

Weiss has also served 12 years on the Pierre City Commission from 1997-2009, holding positions in public works and public safety. He has also served on a number of local and state committees.

"I've been involved in dozens of committees over the years," said Weiss. "The National Guard has been a strong part of my life and I have a genuine concern for our Soldiers, Airmen and our units as they continue to deploy overseas. I'm excited to be involved."



UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 7—South Dakota Veterans Commission Meeting Conference Call

Feb. 18—SFVAHCC Variety Show

Mar. 7—VABHHCS Veterans Creative Arts Show—Fort Meade

Mar. 19—VABHHCS Veterans Creative Arts Show—Hot Springs

Apr. 27-29—VABHHCS Women's Retreat—Fort Meade

May 12—60th Anniversary Korean War Commemoration Display—Brookings

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